



## Stranger Things S4 by elevenwheeler

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**Summary:** On Thanksgiving, the party travel to visit El and the Byers. But, their Thanksgiving celebrations are rudely interrupted by a mysterious phone call. Joyce, needing to attend to some important business, sends Will, Jonathan and El back to Hawkins. But, there's just one small problem... Hawkins isn't Hawkins anymore.

## Stranger Things S4

*el's pov*

I sat with my knees pressed up against my chest, quietly listening to the sound of the wind from outside hammering against my bedroom window.

This new town that Joyce had moved the four of us into felt like it was *always* raining. According to Will, it should be snowing by now or at least getting colder outside. But, neither of those things had happened yet and we are practically *days* away from officially being in the December months.

I'd laid awake for what felt like hours, tossing and turning, feeling too cold and then too hot. I just couldn't get comfy and I couldn't for the *life* of me figure out why.

Back when I lived in Hawkins with Hopper in his cabin - *our* cabin. I would use my powers to move the pillows around or to wrap the blankets tighter around myself. But now... well, now I can't. No matter how hard I try, my powers just don't seem to return. And I've tried *everything*, believe me.

Thinking of Hopper, I reached over to my bedside table and held a small photograph of the both of us in my hands. Ironically, Joyce had taken it of us, the night of the Snowball Dance. She'd come over after Hopper's pleas to help out with my hair, makeup and outfit. It was the one physical memory that I had left of him and I planned to never let it go - not *ever*.

His dark blue eyes seemed to pierce their way into my soul as flashbacks of his voice and the memories that we shared together came flooding back into my mind.

*"Hey... hey! Keep the door open three inches! Three inch minimum remember!"*

I laughed softly, thinking back to his three inch minimum rule. God, Mike and I had thought it was so stupid at the time. We'd joked about

it for weeks, always trying to push our luck by closing the door or meeting up when he wasn't home. But... now, I'd give *anything* to have those moments back. Just to see that bright red, tomato face again that I loved so much.

Glancing up at my bedroom door which I *always* make sure to leave open three inches, I smiled and carefully wiped away a few stray tears that had fallen down my cheeks. "I kept my promise, dad." I whispered, running my fingers slowly over his face. "I will *always* keep the door open three inches."

The clock on my bedside table continued to tick softly away as the seconds, then the minutes and eventually, the hours passed by. Before I knew it, the warm, late November sunrise shone brightly through my windowpane and the time on my clock read 7AM.

I breathed a sigh of both relief and excitement. Relief because the night is finally over which means no more tossing and turning or thinking about the past. And, excitement because today is Thanksgiving. Aka, the day Mike and I *finally* get to be reunited after four long months of being apart from each other.

It sounds silly, I know. Especially when you consider the fact that the both of us were separated from one another for five hundred and fifty-three days before. But, we aren't in Hawkins together anymore. I can't just rush over to his house and snuggle up with him in his basement. I have no choice but to resort to using Mike's hand-me-down walkie talkie which sadly, doesn't always work. Will told me that it was due to the connection and that he was struggling to reach them too. But, today, we'd all be together again and I for one *can't* wait.

"El? It's Mike. Can you hear me?"

Taking a moment to realise that Mike's voice was *finally* coming through the walkie talkie, I leapt out of bed and rushed over to the other side of the room whilst being careful not to make too much noise in fear of waking anyone else in the household up. After all, Joyce works late shifts at one of the grocery stores in town and Jonathan is a full-time college student which according to him, is *extremely* important and requires him to get *a lot* of rest.

With shaking hands, I quickly pressed my finger against the button and began to talk back to him. "Mike!" I tried my best to whisper, but it came out as more of an excited yell. "It's been five days. Where have you been?"

"I know, El. I'm so sorry. But, I've been trying to reach you *every single* night, I promise. You can ask Lucas, Dustin or Max. Hell, you can even ask Steve if -"

"Mike, I believe you." I say, cutting him off with a gentle giggle.

I always found it so adorable when he started to ramble and get flustered. He always seems to get embarrassed by it but for me, it's one of the *many* reasons on my list for why I love him so much.

"I can't wait to see you today." I added quickly, grinning happily to myself.

He chuckled softly. "I can't wait to see you either. I've missed you so much, El. More than you'll ever know."

I smiled at his response and threw myself back down onto my bed, holding the walkie talkie tightly in the palm of my hand. Talking to Mike always made everything so much better than it was. He was right about love making you crazy because it *really* does.

It felt so good to be missed by someone and to be loved by someone. But, it felt even better when that certain '*someone*' just so happens to be Mike Wheeler.

"I know you have. I've missed you so much too." I smiled, rolling over onto my stomach. "So... what time do you think you'll get here?"

"Well, Nancy is loading the car up as we speak. It's going to be *at least* a two hour drive to get to you guys. Plus, we have to wait on Dustin, Max and Lucas to get here too before we can take off."

*Two hours...* is that a long time? I wasn't sure. Although I'd learnt a lot of words over the last couple of years and managed to extend my vocabulary enough so that I could understand and communicate with Mike and everyone else. There were still certain words and phrases that I was unsure of. This, being one of them.

With a shrug of my shoulders and coming to the conclusion that I'd just ask Joyce or Will what it meant later on, I decided to spare Mike the trouble of explaining it to me.

"Okay, that sounds perfect." I agreed, feeling thankful that our Thanksgiving plans were still going ahead.

There was a slight pause, until Mike's voice came over the walkie talkie once more. "Like you."

I blushed and let out an awkward giggle. I held my finger down on the button and smiled, shaking my head shyly back and forth. "Mike Wheeler, you are *such* a flirt."

"Only for you, El Hopper. Only for you." He reminded. "Hey, I'm going to grab some breakfast and start helping Nancy with the car, okay? The sooner I leave *my* house, the sooner I'll be with *you* in yours."

I stood back up from my bed and pushed open my bedroom window, gently inhaling the sweet scent of the autumn leaves and feeling the slight chill in the air brush against my cheekbones.

"Okay, Mike." I replied, curling up against the window seat, which just so happened to be one of my *favourite* features about my new bedroom. "I love you. Have a safe journey, okay?"

*Have a safe journey.* It was a phrase that Joyce would occasionally say to Jonathan when he'd leave for college in the morning's in his car. He *always* came back safe. Every single time, without fail. So, hopefully, by saying the same to Mike, my words would keep him safe too. At least I hoped so.

Without any hesitation, he was quick to answer back. "I love you so much more, El. I'll see you later, okay?"

"Okay." I smiled, turning my walkie talkie off and placing it beside me.

In just a few hours time I'd be wrapped up in Mike's arms again. The one place in the whole world where I *truly* feel safe and protected from all the bad and the evil in the world.

I *can't* wait.